

CURRENT TOPICS

THE OFFICE building of the Los Angeles Times, published by General Harrison Gray Otis was dynamited October 1. Twenty persons were injured and nineteen printers and newspaper men were killed. General Otis and his associates charge that the dynamiting was the work of representatives of union labor, Otis and the Times having waged a twenty-year war against labor organizations. Union labor men bitterly deny the accusation. They have offered their services to help hunt out the guilty parties. The city of Los Angeles has offered a reward of \$10,000 for the discovery of the perpetrators of the crime.

“THE COST OF Rooseveltism” is a favorite subject these days with the New York World. The World says: “The total expenditures of the United States government from the inauguration of Washington in 1789 to the beginning of the civil war in 1861 were \$1,795,273,344.14. The appropriation bills signed by Theodore Roosevelt during his second term in the White House, from March 4, 1905, to March 4, 1909, authorized expenditures amounting to \$3,522,982,816.87. Four years of Rooseveltism cost twice as much as the first seventy-two years of the republic! One term of Theodore Roosevelt took twice as much money out of the pockets of the American people as the combined terms of Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, John Quincy Adams, Jackson, Van Buren, Harrison, Tyler, Polk, Fillmore, Pierce and Buchanan. During the seventy-two years covered by the administrations of these fifteen presidents the United States government paid the revolutionary war debt incurred by the states. It paid the cost of the war of 1812. It paid the cost of the Mexican war. It bought Louisiana. It bought Florida. It paid for the Gadsden purchase. It acquired all that vast extent of territory from the Mississippi river to the Pacific ocean. What have the American people got to show for the four years of Rooseveltism which cost double the money? And what would be the cost of four years more of Roosevelt under the New Nationalism?”

THE PRACTICAL operation of “the recall” is told by William Tittle in LaFollette's Magazine in this way: “The recall was adopted in Oregon through the initiative in 1903, by a popular vote of 58,381 to 31,002. That decisive vote shows that the people want the right, under reasonable limitations, of recalling an unfaithful public official. One such limitation is the filing of a petition for the recall signed by at least 25 per cent of the voters in the given district at the preceding election. A special election within twenty days determines the recall of such officer and the election of another who will truly represent the people. Every firm or corporation employing an agent at a distance retains the power of recall and summarily uses it in case the agent betrays the interests of his principal. The state is a corporation, the people are the stockholders and directors and the representative is the agent who should truly and fairly represent those who elected him. The recall works by threat of use as well as by actual use. In Des Moines, in 1909, the evident determination to use it if necessary, caused the hostile city council to appoint a police marshal who had the confidence of the people. In Los Angeles, the city council had voted away three miles of river bed worth \$1,000,000. The threat of the recall compelled the city council to rescind that vote and restore the property to the city. The threat of the recall forced certain members of the Oregon legislature in 1909 to carry out their pledges to abide by the popular vote for United States senator. The power to use the recall and the certainty that it will be used if necessary will in most cases bring the desired result—the obedience of the representative to those who elected him. But the recall has been used with excellent results. In Los Angeles, its use removed an alderman who had voted to award the contract for city printing to a machine newspaper for an amount \$15,000 more than the bid of the other journals. Can it be doubted that the recall ought to have been used on such an official? In January, 1907, A. C. Harper was elect-

ed mayor of Los Angeles for a term of three years. It soon became plain that he was allied with or controlled by the two forces that have given bad government to most American cities. He was administering the city government for the franchise companies and the vice district. Besides, the city had just issued bonds for \$25,000,000 to be used for public improvements. The fear of graft in contracts and the actual protection of vice and special privilege, led 200 of the best citizens of all parties to meet and determine on the recall. The law required on the petition for the recall 25 per cent of the voters. More than 33 per cent signed such petition. Before the special election, Mr. Harper resigned as mayor and also withdrew as a candidate for re-election. The new mayor, George Alexander, was elected in March, 1909, and for a year and a half has proven to be an honest, able and efficient executive. There is no danger that the recall will be abused. It will not be used until it is absolutely necessary. The people will be just and will be strongly inclined to stand by the preceding election. It would be a perversion of the recall to harass a faithful public official. Such action could only come from the enemies of popular government. It is safe to say that it will almost never be used for ‘light and transient causes.’ But it will safeguard important public interests against transient and unfaithful representatives.”

DEMOCRATIC managers at Washington, encouraged by the result in Maine, say that there is now a chance that the democrats will control the United States senate. A Washington dispatch to the New York World says: “Thirty senators will retire March 3, 1911. Six are democrats. In all six instances democrats will be returned. These seats are those of Culberson of Texas, Swanson of Virginia, Money of Mississippi, Frazier of Tennessee, Rayner of Maryland, and Tallaferro of Florida. In Indiana Albert J. Beveridge is fighting to be returned, with the chances against him. In Connecticut Senator Buckley faces bitter opposition. Gilbert M. Hitchcock in Nebraska expects to swamp the divided republican organization, whose candidate is Senator Burkett. In Missouri, Senator Warner is almost certain to be succeeded by a democrat. Senator Nixon does not expect to return, and the Nevada legislature probably will elect a democrat. Maine has elected a democratic legislature. In Montana the democrats and insurgents are expected to combine in a fight on Senator Carter. New York may elect a democratic legislature and a democratic successor to Depew. In Ohio a landslide may place a democrat in Senator Dick's seat. In addition New Jersey, Massachusetts and North Dakota may flop, and a turnover in West Virginia is a possibility. Should the thirteen states referred to return democrats that party would control the senate. Arizona, at her final territorial election has gone democratic. Should she repeat the performance next year after she has entered the sisterhood of states she will have two democrats in the senate within two years. New Mexico, also on the threshold of statehood, is about an even bet.”

THE REMARKABLE financial returns of the Chicago and Northwestern railroad during the last ten years was brought up recently before the interstate commerce commission by attorneys for shippers who are fighting an increase of freight rates. A Chicago dispatch to the St. Louis Republic, referring to these disclosures, says: “The witness was W. A. Gardner, vice president in charge of operation and maintenance of the road. His testimony elicited by cross-examination by Attorney Frank Lyon for the commission was, in short, that the company thought itself entitled to raise freight charges now in direct dividends and in unappropriated surplus more than the amount of capital stock. The witness also controverted testimony of Illinois Central officials that the increase in cost of operation and maintenance was in large measure due to higher cost of materials. Mr. Gardner's opinion was that the increase in cost of labor and the restrictions put on workmen by recent independence through unions and similar associations were the largest factors in cutting

down net profits. Mr. Gardner did agree, however, with the railroad officials who previously testified to charge shippers enough to pay dividends, fixed charges, cost of operation and maintenance and in addition to return a substantial yearly surplus. He likewise believed this should be expended in additional or improved property and then should receive a suitable interest or dividend from the earnings. “The Northwestern line will not go into bankruptcy next year, or the year after, or the one after that, unless it now raises rates,” began Mr. Gardner, touching upon this subject, “but I do say that regulation by the commission does not control the commercial conditions under which we get money, and unless we soon may get higher rates, we will, in the future, have to run out the red flag. We must be allowed a satisfactory cash surplus above everything each year as a barometer of our surety for credit.” “Would you still say that you should have a right to secure that yearly surplus if you knew your road had, in ten years, paid on \$85,000,000 of stock, dividends amounting to \$56,000,000 and had in addition an unappropriated surplus, taken from earnings of \$30,000,000 more—an amount of net return to stockholders of more than the capital stock?” asked Attorney Lyon. “Yes, I would. As I said I consider its needs only from the standpoint of keeping up credit.” “And in the face of the showing I mentioned, you think that also is required for maintenance of credit?” “I do,” answered the vice president. Mr. Gardner's testimony in relation to the effect of labor pay increases on general maintenance, made up the main part of his direct examination.”

REV. DR. L. A. LAMBERT, of Rochester, N. Y., died recently at New Foundland, N. J. A writer in the New York World says: “The Rev. Dr. Louis A. Lambert has been for many years editor of the Freeman's Journal, a Catholic weekly, but is better known as one of the old school of religious controversialists. Dr. Lambert was taken ill three weeks ago. He was to read a paper at the Eucharistic congress in Montreal. Resolutions were passed there commending Dr. Lambert's long service in the church, and his paper on the Eucharist was received with applause. The death of Dr. Lambert will remove the last of the old school of religious controversy in this hemisphere, at least. Leaders of the religious world are now using the milder forms of discourse to convince or to convert. Dr. Lambert was born seventy-five years ago in Allenport, Pa. He studied at St. Vincent's College, near Latrobe, Pa., and at the Diocesan Seminary in St. Louis. He was ordained in 1859 at Alton, Ill. During the civil war he was chaplain of the Eighteenth regiment of Illinois infantry. After the war he became professor of normal theology and philosophy at the Paulist Novitiate. In the early eighties he made his famous replies to Bob Ingersoll, which were published under the title ‘Notes on Ingersoll.’ Ingersoll was at that time contributing a series of articles to the North American Review in which he attacked Christianity. Two years later a disciple of Ingersoll made a formal reply, and Dr. Lambert followed with his ‘Tactics of Infidels,’ which was disseminated by the Y. M. C. A. About this time he became involved in a long and bitter discussion with the late Bishop McQuaid of Rochester. The bishop refused to assign him to parochial duty in that diocese. Lambert appealed to Rome and the papal decision was in his favor. Bishop McQuaid then assigned him to a village church at Scottsville, Monroe county, where he has resided for nearly twenty years. He became editor of the Freeman's Journal in 1894. Recently Protestant and Catholic clergymen joined with him in celebrating the golden jubilee of his ministry. Close friends of Dr. Lambert have been deeply chagrined that his service did not receive some official recognition by the church.”

BUT, WILL WICKERSHAM MOVE?

“Government All Ready to Move Against Sugar Trust—Suit to Dissolve Only Awaits Word from Mr. Wickersham, the Attorney General,” reads a familiar newspaper headline. Is the attorney general in real earnest this time, or is this just a “wicker” sham?